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DEPARTMENT OF STATE TELEGRAM

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1471

INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

USCINCSO

~~SECRET~~ CARACAS 862

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

SUBJECT: VENEZUELA/COLOMBIA DISPUTE: DEMARCATION OF GULF OF VENEZUELA

REF: STATE 23836; CARACAS 780 (NOTAL) AND CARACAS 844

1. DEPARTMENT WILL NOTE IN FURTHER RESPONSE TO STATE 23836 THAT FONMIN CALVANI TOLD AMBASSADOR JOVA (CARACAS 844) THAT GOV POSITION FROM TIME OF LEONI GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN THAT GULF OF VENEZUELA WAS DEFINED BY "LINE DRAWN ON PARALLEL FROM CASTILLETAS POINT WHICH MARKED LIMIT BELOW WHICH GOV WOULD NOT EVEN DISCUSS MATTER." CALVANI THEN ADDED THAT "LINE EXTENDING LAND BOUNDARY OUT INTO SEA, WHILE CONSIDERED NORMAL AND CORRECT WAS SUBJECT TO NEGOTIATION."

2. CALVANI'S POSITION SHEDS FURTHER LIGHT ON STILL UNFORMED LEGAL POSITION OF GOV BUT CONFIRMS OUR VIEWS EXPRESSED IN CARACAS 780 (PARA 3) THAT IT STILL WANTS TO RETAIN SOME FLEXIBILITY IN NEGOTIATIONS.

3. YET EVIDENT CHANGE FROM CLAIM UNDER LEONI GOVERNMENT MAY REFLECT RESULTS OF LAST YEARS' LEGAL HOMEWORK BY FOREIGN MINISTRY AS WELL AS INCREASED AWARENESS THAT GEOLOGICAL STRUCTURES IN GULF MIGHT INDICATE THAT RICHEST POTENTIAL PETROLEUM BEDS TO BE FOUND SOMEWHAT NORTH OF PARALLEL DRAWN FROM CASTILLETAS POINT.

GP-3.

MCELINTOCK

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